



Week 30 - Sanctification: More Grace

Sanctification

Sanctification is the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit to free us from bondage, ungodly habits and the pollution of sin and gradually set us apart to God. Jesus, our pattern, transforms every aspect of our lives so that we can say with Paul, “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me” (Galatians 2:20).

The Gift and Pursuit of Righteousness

The gift of righteousness that the Lord provides us through faith makes this new life possible. Where self-will fails, encountering the beauty and goodness of God triumphs, helping us to understand our rebirth as His holy and blameless children (Ephesians 2:4-7). We do not try to live right to become holy in God’s sight, but we live right because we have been made holy (Ephesians 2:10). This is the gift of God.

Although the old life can creep up on us, remembering our right standing with God through the blood of Jesus keeps guilt, condemnation, alienation and other effects of “the Fall” out of our lives.

Righteousness as a gift (result of justification) enables us to stand before God with the confidence that we are His own. This “imputed righteousness” comes when we are born again. (Romans 1:17; 2 Corinthians 5:21). It is undeserved, a gift, and all we need to stand before God without guilt, shame or fear. This “declarative” righteousness becomes our own when we turn to the Lord in faith. God credits to our account the worth of His own precious Son.

“He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Righteousness as a pursuit is the process of sanctification. As His interests replace our interests, we hunger and thirst for more of His righteousness (Matthew 5:6). God Himself builds within us a deep desire to do what’s right. This is a progressive work but typically begins at the salvation experience.

“For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image or His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren...and whom He predestined, these

He also called; and whom He called these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified” (Romans 8:29).

Glorification is our destination. We seek glory. To be esteemed, loved, admired, and valued is the unseen engine in our hearts, whether it moves us to heights of fame or to the depths of ill-repute. As we seek God’s glory, He rewards us with His commendation (Matthew 25:21, 23), an imperishable body (1 Corinthians 15:53), and an eternal inheritance (Colossians 3:24). Confusing sanctification with justification leads to error and heresy. The table below compares these two graces:

We need a healthy balance. Justification without sanctification misses the dynamic and glorious relationship with God. Scripture says, “Without sanctification no man can see God” (Hebrews 12:14). Sanctification apart from justification produces instability, condemnation and insecurity.

All we receive is by God’s Grace “...to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved” (Ephesians 1:6)

“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, Who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds” (Titus 2:11-14).

According to this passage, grace...

Brings salvation – saves us -- instructs us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires; enables us, tells us to live sensibly, righteously, and godly in the present age; empowers us, keeps us looking ahead for the appearing of Jesus – keeps us pressing on!

Review:

1. Is “sanctification” an instantaneous, additional work of grace, or an ongoing process?
2. Who inspires us toward a more “Godly” life?
3. What is our eternal inheritance?